

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO USMISSION NATO

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4322

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 5535

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR NATO PO BU

SUBJECT: BULGARIAN-PORTUGUESE RELATIONS

REF: USNATO 4939 AND SOFIA 2027

1. FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCE CONFIRMS THAT BULGARIAN GOVERNMENT PROPOSED ELIMINATION OF TOURIST VISAS TO PORTUGUESE EMBASSY AT SOFIA. OFFER WILL PROBABLY BE ACCEPTED. GENERAL TALKS CONCERNING CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC MATTERS ARE NOW IN PROGRESS BETWEEN BULGARIA AND PORTUGAL AND PORTUGUESE PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES IS TO VISIT BULGARIA SHORTLY. AGREEMENT MAY BE WORKED OUT INCIDENTAL TO ONE OF THOSE EVENTS.

2. COMMENTS MADE BY AMEMBASSY SOFIA IN PARA 3 ITS 2027 ARE CORRECT WITH RESPECT TO BALANCE OF SECURITY. IMMIGRATION IN SALAZAR-CAETANO REGIME FELL UNDER PIDE, THE SECRET POLICE. AFTER REVOLUTION, PIDE WAS DISMANTLED AND ITS IMMIGRATION AND POLICE INTELLIGENCE FUNCTIONS FARMED OUT TO OTHER AGENCIES, BUT THEY HAVE NOT YET BECOME FULLY EFFECTIVE. IMMIGRATION INSPECTION AT PORTS OF ENTRY NOWADAYS IS NOT STRINGENT, ALTHOUGH INSPECTORS DO HAVE REFERENCE TO LOOKOUT BOOKS. USUAL EUROPEAN PRACTICE OF REQUIRING HOTELS TO TRANSMIT PASSPORT INFORMATION TO POLICE IS USED.

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3. TOURISM IS AN IMPORTANT INDUSTRY IN PORTUGAL, PORTUGUESE HAVE A GENERAL POLICY OF DISPENSING WITH TOURIST VISA REQUIREMENTS WHENEVER POSSIBLE. FOR SOME YEARS NOW, TOURIST VISAS HAVE NOT BEEN REQUIRED OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AND NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICAN TOURISTS VISITING METROPOLITAN PORTUGAL, AZORES, AND MADEIRA. VISAS OF SHORT VALIDITY ARE STILL REQUIRED TO VISIT MACAU, TIMOR AND ANGOLA.
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